



## Federal, State and Local Partnership Brings Farmers Market to Life

Town of Ashland City Mayor Richard Johnson was concerned about the sagging agricultural economy and lack of facilities for their Farmers Market.

Reaching out last year to state and federal partners the [Town of Ashland City](#) received a USDA Rural Development [Rural Business Enterprise Grant](#) of \$66,523 in addition to funding from the [Tennessee Department of Agriculture](#) to assist them in the construction of a Farmers Market.

Celebrating their grand opening in August 2015, the new [Ashland City Farmers and Artisans Market](#) is located at Riverbluff Park, a community gathering spot that already hosts many weekday and weekend events. Adding the covered, ADA compliant facility complete with water and electricity hook-ups will create new farmer and vendor opportunities giving local producers a venue to sell their products to the public and provide the community with a central location to purchase fresh, locally grown products.



*Local, Max Harris, brings a variety of fresh vegetables to the market*

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack has identified strengthening local food systems as one of the four pillars of USDA's commitment to rural economic development. This segment of agriculture is a vibrant growth area that is drawing young people back to rural communities, generating jobs and improving quality of life in rural communities. USDA's [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food](#) Initiative coordinates the Department's policy, resources, and outreach efforts related to local and regional food systems. Over the past six years, USDA has strengthened local and regional food systems by investing more than \$800 million in projects that recruit and train farmers, expand economic opportunities for small businesses and increase access to healthy foods.

USDA Rural Development is moving investments to rural America with housing, business and infrastructure loans and grants to create jobs and strengthen rural economies. Since 2009, the agency has assisted more than 1.5 million Tennessee families and businesses in 230 communities in all 95 counties of Tennessee, investing more than \$5.4 Billion through affordable loans, loan guarantees and grants. For more information on USDA Rural Development programs available in Middle Tennessee contact the Nashville Area Office at 615.783.1359, or visit us online at [www.rd.usda.gov/TN](http://www.rd.usda.gov/TN).

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**Obligation Amount:** \$66,523 Grant

**Date of Obligation:** July 2014

**Congressional District:** Representative Cooper, 5; Senators Alexander and Corker

**Partners:** TN Department of Agriculture, Town of Ashland City

**Demographics:** Residents and Producers in Cheatham County, TN

**Impact:** This project will create new farmer and vendor jobs, give local farmers a venue to sell their products to the public and provide the community with a central location to purchase fresh, locally grown products.

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